

A REPORT
ON THE
EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLISH
FOR ADMISSION TO
HARVARD COLLEGE

[Price 15 cents]

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JUNE 1906

BY
C. N. GREENOUGH
F. W. C. HERSEY
C. R. NUTTER

INSTRUCTORS IN ENGLISH AT HARVARD COLLEGE



CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
Published by the University
1907

632.387
E067

Gift
The University

1907



PREFATORY NOTE

Several years' experience in reading English entrance examination books has impressed upon us the regularity with which candidates repeat certain elementary errors. To put into the hands of teachers a large number of these errors and to make some suggestions for preventing them are the objects of this report. Any questions or comments from teachers will be welcome. They should be addressed to C. N. Greenough, 20 Holworthy Hall, Cambridge.

Copies of this report (*price fifteen cents*) may be obtained from the Publication Agent, 2 University Hall, Cambridge.

CAMBRIDGE, February 22, 1907.

The entrance examination in Elementary English for June, 1906, was as follows :—

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH (a)

(TWO HOURS)

The examiner expects you to plan each answer before writing, to write neatly and legibly, to spell and punctuate correctly, and to be accurate and intelligent in choosing words and in framing sentences and paragraphs.

I

(ONE HOUR)

Write carefully planned compositions on three of the following subjects.

1. The good traits in Macbeth's character.
2. Antonio and Bassanio as gentlemen.
3. The scenes in *The Merchant of Venice* which excite sympathy for Shylock.
4. Scott's poetry.
5. My first reading of *The Lady of the Lake*.
6. The best scene in *The Lady of the Lake* and my reasons for liking it.
7. "I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark'd Him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die."
8. How Gareth became a knight.
9. Godfrey Cass.
10. My reading apart from the prescribed books.

II

(ONE HOUR)

The examiner expects answers not merely correct but also well composed. Answer all the questions.

1. What is the plot of *Comus*?
2. Are the characters in *Comus* as much like real persons as the characters in Shakspeare's plays? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Relate the early life of Addison up to the time when he began to write for the *Spectator*.
4. Tell what you know about Johnson's Club.

A REPORT ON THE EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLISH

I. ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

No type is too large to print the statement that the examination in Elementary English for admission to Harvard College is not primarily a test of information, even though that information concerns English literature, but a test in which ability to write is indispensable and all but completely sufficient. That this is not more fully realized may perhaps be due to the fact that colleges have formed the habit of testing candidates in English by asking them questions on a fixed list of books. The temptation is therefore very strong to teach merely the books prescribed to illustrate the subject, instead of teaching the subject itself. The chief result of reading these prescribed books should be an increase of ability to appreciate other books. The examiner would gladly see if this result has been attained by asking the candidate what he honestly thinks of certain passages of prose or poetry which he is presumed not to have seen before. But, except as optional questions, such tests can be given only after due notice in advance. Again, the examiner feels that most boys would be more themselves when explaining how to play base-ball or hockey than when endeavoring to tell what they think they ought to think about the character of Shylock. He would like also to take the measure of a boy from his answer to such a question as "What were the causes of the American Revolution?" But he cannot confine himself to such questions,—not because these matters are outside English literature, but because not all boys can be presumed to be informed about them. Until one can get around the fact that the questions must be explicit and that each boy must have an equal chance to furnish

himself with the subject-matter to answer them, it will be difficult not to base the examination chiefly upon topics drawn from given books.

How, then, can teachers use these prescribed books and at the same time pay due attention to the very important statements¹ in the Harvard admission requirements in English that "no candidate will be accepted in English whose work is seriously faulty in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or division into paragraphs," and that "in every case the examiner will regard knowledge of the books as less important than ability to write English"? The Harvard examiners believe that at least one-half of the time which the teacher of English has at his disposal should be spent upon instruction in English Composition. This instruction, instead of being limited to matters of grammar, punctuation, and the like, should not only include, but should strongly emphasize, those principles of composition which guide us in the construction of sentences, paragraphs, and short whole compositions.

GRAMMAR AND RHETORIC

The statement in the *Harvard University Catalogue* (ed. 1906-07, page 336) that "no candidate will be accepted in English whose work is seriously faulty in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or division into paragraphs" means more than that deficiency in all of these points will prove fatal: it means that total ignorance of any one of them will be sufficient reason for failure. First, therefore, let us try to sum up from the English examination books written in June, 1906, the chief weaknesses which mark boys as hopelessly inaccurate in grammar and rhetoric, and therefore, whatever their information about the prescribed books, candidates for the grade of *E*.²

The high school teacher no doubt feels that he has every right to take knowledge of English grammar for granted. But certainly he cannot take practical command of it for granted. His pupils may know the difference between a phrase and a clause; they may even be able to distinguish between complex sentences

¹ *Harvard University Catalogue*, 1906-07, p. 336.

² It is perhaps unnecessary to explain that books are graded *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, or *E*: *E* means failure; *A* or *B* means distinguished excellence.

and compound; but in actual practice they seem to feel that such a topic as "The Character of Ivanhoe" is a matter so essentially important that it may be written about in sentences which are not merely compound when they ought to be complex, but which often lack that without which no sentence can ever satisfy the fastidious, — a verb. A high school teacher who does not spend a considerable part of the first year in reviewing, supplementing, and enforcing the instruction already given in the grammar schools may be sure that much of his more advanced instruction will be misspent. The importance of this advice is sufficiently illustrated by the following examples, most of which are so gross that comment upon them is unnecessary.¹

1. "Then follows various scenes."

2. "The most noted seems to have been Goldsmith, Garrick, Burke and others."

3. "Addison wrote a description of his travels which were freely criticised."

4. "Even an uneducated person without reading any comments but just depending on the play as they read it would brand both as the highest type of gentlemen."

5. "Our first impression of Sylock, even after seeing the play produced seems to arouse our hatred towards him but when each of the Jew's misfortunes are considered, we cannot avoid feeling a spark of sympathy for him."

6. "The child who just able to creep was attracted by the fire within whose glow reflected on the snow through the open door."

7. "Macbeth's bravery is seen in the way he defeated the Danes. And again when we hear Duncan compare Macbeth to Bellona's bridegroom. Then too in the respect which the other characters hold him."

8. "Then too the way the murders which he has committed weigh on him later."

9. "In the scene where Shylock tells Antonio how he has treated him on the Rialto and the answer which Antonio gives him shows plainly to us that Antonio has forgotten himself."

¹ All of the examples in this pamphlet were written in June, 1906, by candidates for admission to Harvard College. Many of them, of course, contain other defects than the one which they are selected to illustrate.

10. "Which showed that he still had some spark of manhood left within him."

11. "When he tells graphically how he is spurned by the vilest Christian, his cloak is spit upon, and he is called dog, knave and as many other vile names as his Christian tormentors can devise."

12. "Whereas the shapes of the people in the plays of Shakespeare, never loose their originality."

13. "Among whom were Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds and others."

14. "Tennyson does not state who Gareth married."

15. "He calls curses on the head of his daughter who he once loved with all his heart."

16. "He was too good to act as bad as his brother Dunstan."

17. "At this time Antonio's ships were all at sea and had no ready money to give Bassanio."

18. "Her brothers, who were her companions meet a farmer he knowing where this Comus lives and leads them there."

19. "Antonio is direct, a little harsh, and yet his friendship for Bassanio and Bassanio's love for him are characters that no one who has read the play cannot help from recommending it with the highest praise."

20. "Gareth was the son of Lot, a most bitter antagonist of Arthur and in the baron's war was killed leaving three sons the youngest of whom was Gareth."

21. "He cannot even call his life his own, besides losing all his money, does he not deserve pity?"

22. "I think the way that Antonio stood by his friend and was ready to die if necessary for him, was a higher, nobler and greater man than 'Comus.'"

23. "Johnson finally acquired enough money to keep the wolf from his door, and to occasionally, if not often, lie in bed in the morning."

Equally serious is the prevalent neglect of English idiom, which is most frequently revealed in the ill-treatment of prepositions. Sometimes this neglect seems traceable to the habit of translating foreign languages word by word with no real effort to find the corresponding English idiom.

24. "Bassanio spent most of his time for the interest of his business and also for friends."

25. "To one who is perhaps prejudiced, Sylock does not at any time arouse any great amount of simpathy."

26. "For this manly act King Arthur bestowed Gareth with knight-hood."

27. "One cannot help to be more or less interested in one of the characters namely Shylock."

28. "He succeeded to keep it secret."

29. "This I think the principal reason to judge him courteous."

30. "The motives which prompt him selfish though they are, are done not to do any wrong but only to secure his own safety."

31. "So after inviting Duncan to the castle to spend the night he prepared to kill Duncan which was against his will."

32. "The plot in the Comus is Vice and Temptation trying to best Chastity."

33. "Macbeth was an able general, and did not have any traits to kill anyone."

34. "The tables are turned, Antonio having the Jew at his complete mercy."

35. "After a while their judgment on a certain book having become known, it would either give unbounded popularity or condemnation to the work."

36. "Comus, coming up, found her and enchanted her body, her mind, being pure, remaining untouched."

Boys whose command of grammar and idiom is so imperfect might be expected to be weak in spelling and in the use of capital letters. They are. Their inability to spell has two disastrous results: first, it cramps their vocabulary by limiting them to words which they think they know how to spell¹; secondly, it causes positive errors which, if very frequent, are sufficient reason for failure. Of the following examples of these errors the words starred are altogether the most common.

accustomed.

agreeableness.

alow.

*alright.

*altho.

annimal.

borroring (*for* borrowing).

carear.

¹ An examiner often finds that a candidate has balked at a hard word, crossed it out, and substituted an easy one.

- *cheif.
- cirtain.
- coenside.
- cralled (*for* crawled).
- cruilty.
- debase.
- *decission.
- dept (*for* debt).
- *dieing (*for* dying).
- *differant.
- discised (*for* disguised).
- *discribe.
- *dissapeared.
- *dissappoint.
- draging.
- drugery.
- ducets.
- duckets.
- douchess.
- enjure.
- *exagerate.
- excuisate (*for* exquisite).
- fary (*for* fairy).
- feal.
- feaseability.
- *finaly.
- forfiture.
- *french.
- gauling taunts.
- glommy (*for* gloomy).
- *godess.
- gost (*for* ghost).
- *grammer.
- graphicly.
- hearafter.
- hieiniousness.
- *independant.
- *infinite.
- *insistant.
- *interlectual.
- intised.
- Itally.
- *it's (possessive).
- knaw (*for* gnaw).
- knight (*for* night).
- Laten.
- *latin.
- Latten.
- Lattin.
- *lead (*for* led).
- *litterary.
- *loose (*for* lose).
- louses (*for* loses).
- messanger.
- nave (*for* knave).
- night (*for* knight).
- *noticable.
- noticible.
- nymphth.
- ostricised.
- overestamated.
- permission.
- permission.
- *phamplet.
- *planed (*for* planned).
- populor.
- *posess.
- pray (*for* prey).
- *predjudice.
- prey (*for* pray).
- *principal (*for* principle).
- *principle (*for* principal).
- *privelage.
- *proffession.
- promiscous.
- *prommissed.
- prophasies.
- propicies.
- *recieve.
- redeme.
- repeatedly.
- *rythum (*and various other substitutes for* rhythm).
- senes (*for* scenes).
- *sentance.
- *seperate.

*shepard.	two (<i>for to</i>).
*shepheard.	togeather.
shure.	threshold ("the starry thresh-
sirch.	hole of Jove's court").
soliloquoy.	*thoroughly.
sollaquie.	*thru.
sumed up.	thruout.
*supprise.	undoubtably.
suprise.	villiage.
thier.	*villian.
*tho.	Veneecian.
*thot (<i>for thought</i>).	warrier.
timerity.	wickid.
*to (<i>for too</i>).	*writer.

Our concern is not primarily with proper names, even if they are improperly spelled. Therefore we shall not dwell upon the *Gaurdian Angle* who revealed himself to one critic of Addison's *Campaign*; nor shall we attempt to penetrate the disguise of *Adderson*, *Banco*, *Bodswel*, *McCauley*, or *Sir Josuar Renals*. Such forms as *Physche*, *Physh*, *Pyche*, *Syche*, *Physyce*, *Psyce*, and *Physic* betray ignorance of classical etymology, the significance of which will be spoken of later.

From the list of misspellings it seems clear that: —

(a) Many errors in spelling occur because the boy attempts to write words as he mispronounces them. *Graphicly*, *cruilty*, *coen-side*, *ostricised*, *threshold*, *wickid*, *timerity*, and *sentance* are examples of this. To remedy this kind of misspelling teachers must encourage reading aloud and must insist that pupils give to each syllable its proper value.

(b) To spell correctly a boy must know not merely the whole word, but the separate syllables. If he knows Greek and Latin, he must apply them; if he does not know Greek and Latin, his teacher of English will do well to write on the blackboard such words as *describe*, *surprise*, and *separate*, and to explain that *discribe* would mean "to write to pieces," *supprise* would be "to under-take" instead of "to overtake," and *seperate* would lose its family resemblance to *prepare*, *parade*, and the like. Before leaving this point, we venture to remind teachers that even a slight

study of etymology will increase appreciation as well as accuracy, for it will reveal the metaphor hidden in such words as *attention*,¹ *apprehend*, *ostracised*, and will prevent such expressions as, "Gareth was the most unique son of Lot and Bellicent," wherein the word *unique* is made false to its own etymology.

(c) Many misspellings, like many improprieties, result from the confusion of similar words. These troublesome pairs of words, such as *loose* and *lose*, *principal* and *principle*, *except* and *accept*, should be learned as foreign paradigms are learned, — by exact and insistent drill.

Another subject for exact and insistent drill is punctuation. If boys cannot understand that marks of punctuation mean almost as much as the words which they separate, and if they cannot as yet feel on friendly terms with semicolons and colons, they can at least avoid the following sins, both of omission and of commission, in the use of the comma: —

(a) Many boys have been allowed to omit the comma after the next to the last word in a series when "and" follows. At Harvard it is insisted that in such cases the comma shall be used.

37. "Macbeth was brave, daring and noble."

38. "The careless, free and impulsive Bassanio."

39. "Four armed men who called themselves by the odd names of Morning Star, Noon Sun, Evening Star and Night."

(b) In dealing with words which are parenthetical or in apposition candidates make such blunders as: —

40. "He was not however strong enough to ignore the prophecy."

41. "In Comus the characters especially the Lady does not seem as real."

42. "Macbeth the villianous king of Scotland."

43. "It was Lancelot the chief of knights who had followed Gareth."

44. "The motives which prompt him selfish though they are, are," etc.

¹ Carlyle, *Past and Present*, Book ii, Chap. 17, quoted by A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 115. See also J. B. Greenough and G. L. Kittredge, *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, pp. 9 ff.

45. "When Gareth, the son of Lot and Bellicent became of age, he," etc.

46. "Noble breeding one of the chief requisites of a gentleman are unquestionably possessed by both."

47. "Shylock turns to leave the room a complete outcast penniless and compelled to change his religion."

(c) Candidates are so given to the indiscriminate use of compound sentences that they should certainly learn how to punctuate coördinate clauses; yet over and over again an examiner finds such sentences as these: —

48. "He doesn't weary one with useless description but nevertheless his attention to detail is surprising when one looks especially for that thing."

49. "His best studies were the classics but in everything which he undertook he was noted for his clearness."

(d) Although an examiner is grateful for every complex sentence he finds, his satisfaction is not complete unless the punctuation of the subordinate clause is more intelligent than this: —

50. "After Gareth's first victory the maiden seemed a little more pleased with her companion but even after he had conquered Noonday Sun she declared she could still smell the odor of the kitchen."

51. "This friendship though it is admirable in itself and one of the marks of gentlemen is not the principal point which marks them as such."

52. "Gareth claims the quest and quickly donning his armor he gallops after Lynette who had fled from Arthur's court."

53. "In despair they call upon the virgin Sabrina who rising from the river gives them the herb by which the lady is restored to life."

54. "When Clan Alpine's men drive the Saxon light infantry before them his face brightens and he wishes he had been there to share and complete the victory."

55. "Up to this time although he is conceded to be unfortunate in many respects real sympathy is not called forth."

56. "They, however, need not worry over her safty as her wisdom and virtue protected her."

(e) A particularly troublesome kind of complex sentence is that which contains a relative clause. Few candidates understand the difference between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. Hence the entrance examination books contain a great many such sentences as: —

57. "He seems to change his very being and to commit crimes, which he would have positively shuddered at before."

58. "No true gentleman could refuse to give so slight a reward to a person, who had so nobly served him, as the learned doctor has served Bassanio."

59. "The plot is entirely developed by the author himself who moves his characters and causes them to speak at his pleasure."

60. "He even goes so far as to say that he would willingly sacrifice Portia whom he has only just won if in doing so he might save Antonio."

Errors such as these have brought down the grade of *E* upon book after book. Let us now consider a few cases where the choice of words makes the style harsh or slovenly. Such a style, although it may not result in actual failure, can hardly rise to the grade of *C*, which denotes satisfactory work.

61. "Addison was a student-loving boy."

62. "One brother is an optimus and the other a pessimus."

63. "The proscribed books." (A very common way of referring to the books prescribed for entrance in English.)

64. "Now I was enthused by the pleasure I found in 'The Lady of the Lake.'"

65. "Imagine how severe a blow feels when your only amiability is abducted in a manner as Jessica was taken."

66. "I have read from several different authors, fictional and otherwise."

67. "Of the more technical books, I have read several editions on Electricity and Engineering."

68. "The 'Autocrat' was full of fresh ideas, and, in the main, little stunts of pleasant nonsense."

69. "Although his bad points are showed up rather plainly, he has some good ones."

70. "His younger brother was kind of jealous of Godfrey's life."

71. "There Shylock had come to get his forfeit of a pound of flesh in perfectly good faith but got the raw end of the deal."

72. "If any real good apology could be made for this first murder, all the others would fall in line."

73. "I got an outline of the story and saw the plot as big as a side of a house."

74. "In this way, while reading, I came to read merely to notice the grammar."

75. "The second time is at the time when he is standing before the judge."

76. "Squire Cass was considered a man of considerable wealth."

77. "Still one thing still disturbed him greatly. The child was still alive even if the mother was dead."

78. "Truly it is a pitiful sight to hear the broken-hearted old father repeat to his dearest friend the escapades of his trusted daughter Jessica."

79. "Shylock whetted his revenge to the kindling point."

80. "Shylock was so blinded by his thirst for revenge that he bit off his own nose."

SENTENCES

First of all, a boy's command of grammar, punctuation, and common sense must combine to tell him what a sentence is. He will then see the absurdity of writing such inarticulate masses of words as these:—

81. "Gareth's duty was over he had won his knighthood and the esteem and love of both Elaine and King Arthur."

82. "His whole nature changed instead of the kind, good, and generous man, he became a harsh, tyrannical and imperious ruler."

83. "Addison was born in 1672 he went to college, graduated, traveled over nearly all Europe, and engaged in politics."

84. "That day a young lady asked a boon of the king, she desired Lancelot to combat for her and when Gareth asked permission for this undertaking it was willingly granted much to the disgust of the maiden, Laine."

85. "Perhaps my most gratifying result was the reading of several of Edgar Allan Poe's works, I like his style, his clear and strong description."

86. "Addison was born in the year 1672, and at an early age entered college, he immediately showed signs of being a scholar."

87. "When Macbeth was sent to the frontier to fight with the Norwegians, in absence of Duncan, he fought with the true spirit of patriotism, though he could easily have sold the kingdom into the hands of Norway, yet he remained faithful."

88. "Macbeth was not weak minded, he made a hard struggle against evil, but his ambition caused his ruin."

89. "The bearing of Antonio in the Trial Scene, is so beautiful that it seems rather above human, refusing to fawn and beg mercy of the revengeful Jew, he prefers to take his punishment and take it like a man."

90. "The characters in Comus are too affected, too wooden, they are not natural, especially the brothers, to act as they do, would be impossible in real life."

91. "The Johnson Club was a club composed of such men as Johnson, Steele, Boswell, Goldsmith, Reynolds and others, the purpose of it was to get together at a quite social gathering and discuss literary topics, and this kind of thing was in those days as beneficial as the great libraries of today, because the best wits of the day gathered there and talked over the social conditions, that prevailed at that time, and the fact that Johnson was a member ought to be sufficient evidence for any one that it was a success, for nowhere in the history of the world, was there ever a greater conversationalist than he."

Not only do the entrance examination books reveal little understanding of what a sentence is; they show also that few candidates know how to make their sentences units in thought, and that fewer still know how to represent that unity in thought by unity in form. More than for any other single fault boys who take the Harvard entrance examinations in English suffer because they do not see which of two ideas in a sentence deserves to be made subordinate, and because they have little or no practical command of such grammatical devices for expressing subordination as the parenthesis, the dependent clause, and the participial phrase.

92. "We can see Portia represented in other people and I don't know how many times I have seen Shylock's character unfurled in actual life."

93. "Bassanio was the son of a gentleman and he was also on the Rialto a great deal of the time."

94. "Addison was always remarkable for his wit and humor but he never returned an insult."

95. "There were two brothers and their sister walking through a wood and in some way the sister became separated from her brothers and met a man who offered to show her the way."

96. "The Whigs again lost power and the 'Tatler' had to be stopped but it was quickly replaced by the 'Spectator,' which was even a greater success."

97. "Addison was a stout Whig and he had an office, that netted him about three hundred pounds a year, as secretary for Ireland and secretary of State but when Queen Anne came into power she, being a strong Tory, threw out all the Whig members of the government."

98. "Shylock did not show mercy; but we all know that he was no gentleman, and because he did not, is it any reason why Antonio and Bassanio should make themselves the cause of his destruction and finally death?"

99. "The natural desire is to despise the whole race of Jews and in so doing we are forced to see the evils of his nature, rather than the good points, but there are many places where we must have the deepest feeling for anyone of this outcast race."

100. "The maiden wanders in the woods, and is tempted by the surrounding evils, and is led astray from the enchantress Comus, who offers her a drink, which if taken would change her into the form of an animal like unto her many converts whom she had foiled by the deluding liquor."

101. "He finds her lost in the forest so makes her think that he is a shepherd thus bringing her to his palace where he tempts her in every way possible but she always gives him an answer which he cannot overthrow."

102. "The youth followed her until they were lost in the woods and it was not long before they came upon six robbers, dragging a prisoner."

One offence against Unity in form is common enough to deserve special notice. The really well-planned answer is likely to consist of a general statement followed by a series of reasons for that statement. Answers thus constructed deserve so much credit that the examiners regret to see a boy mar his plan by including in a single sentence both the general statement and the first reason for it, and by phrasing the other reasons in separate sentences.¹

¹ See p. 26 for an analogous error in paragraph structure.

103. "There are several reasons why Shakspeare's characters are more like real persons than Milton's: in the first place the characters in *Comus* are meant to resemble traits. In the second place," etc.

To deal with Coherence is more difficult. Teachers of English in colleges may well feel gratified if by the end of the Freshman year their pupils are able to write coherently. And yet an examiner may reasonably withhold any grade above *D* from the boy who does not show at least a groping sense of Coherence. Hardly any teacher of English needs to be told that Professor Wendell, whose treatment of this matter is decidedly the best, has pointed out¹ that Coherence is to be attained by the proper order of words, by the arrangement of parallel ideas in parallel constructions, and by the skilful use of connectives. To employ the first of these devices is merely to arrange words and phrases in the most natural order; to neglect it results in sentences like these: —

104. "Comus is about to force some julep which he has in a glass on their sister."

105. "Godfrey Cass was called away from a nice time where his loved Nancy was together with the doctor by Silas Marner who had found Godfrey's daughter in his home instead of his gold."

106. "In the causes that Shylock gives for hating Antonio, just before lending the money if all he said was true, some of the things that Antonio did was not quite like a gentleman, although he may have been provoked to such an extent that no human being could have contained himself."

Everybody knows that the dangling participle is one of the commonest offences against Coherence. Probably there will always be dangling participles, but we cannot help thinking that there would be fewer had not the good old-fashioned drill of "parsing" almost perished from the earth. The following examples more than sufficiently illustrate this fault: —

107. "Hated and persecuted by the people of his time, one cannot help sympathizing with Shylock."

108. "While waiting in the court, a noble maiden named Lynette entered and asked the king, to give her Sir Launcelot."

¹ *English Composition*, Chapter 3.

109. "Although blest with a loving wife, she was too ambitious for the welfare of her husband."

110. "Being a boy, the story is told of Addison that he once participated in a barring-out."

111. "Drinking this, Comus can have no power over them."

112. "Having reared his daughter and having tried to inculcate in her, the loftiest ideals of his race, it is sad to gaze upon him after her elopement."

113. "After serving as kitchen nave for a few months, his mother relented and set him free from his promise."

Few boys of eighteen can catch the trick of using those parallel constructions which make the prose of Macaulay so satisfying to read and so profitable to imitate; but every boy of eighteen ought to be trained to avoid such "defective double-harness"¹ as

114. "Scott's poems appeal to me, because they are quite probable, good rythum and sound plot."

115. "The Club served to make them acquainted with one another also knit them together closely and to punish each others faults."

116. "They see ahead of them a woman whom Red Murdock says is crazy; that she wanders about through the forest; that it would be better for the neighborhood if she were killed."

117. "In spite of Johnson's rough, rude ways and although, he ate like a pig, he had many friends."

118. "Our hatred is changed to compassion when we hear stern Portia, as judge declare that one-half his goods must be surrendered to the state the other half to Antonio and his life to lie on the mercy of the man against whom he has plotted."

119. "When Macbeth, valour's minion, was informed by the witches of his being the future king and although the wording gladly struck his ears, his first thought and pleasure was to write his wife, so that she might share the happiness of such a thought."

The relation of the foregoing remarks about words and sentences to the notes on paragraphs and whole compositions which are to follow may best be summarized in Professor Wendell's

¹ *The King's English*, Oxford, 1906, pp. 311 ff.

generalization¹ that "words and sentences are subjects of revision; paragraphs and whole compositions are subjects of pre-vision." Revision, therefore, should have served to correct all the blunders which we have so far discussed, unless those blunders were inadvertent. We cannot, then, too strongly advise boys who take the entrance examination not to spend the whole of the allotted time in writing their answers, but to save at least one-fifth of their time for a careful revision of their first draft. They will perhaps make this revision more thorough if they realize that although examination books must be legible, they need not be immaculate. They should remember that no careful writer considers his first draft inviolable. If he does not rewrite entirely, he is sure to strike out many words, to substitute some new ones, and to rearrange various phrases. This is precisely what candidates in English ought to do instead of writing to the very end of the allotted time.

But even if he does save a little time to look over his paper, no boy can be expected to revise his own work successfully who has not in school been made to rewrite manuscript in the light of careful corrections. That school compositions are meagrely corrected is supposed to be due to lack of time. In one direction at least there is a remedy: the teacher of English who is spending more than half his time on the prescribed books ought to re-adjust his programme so as to pay more attention to the study of Composition. Otherwise he is letting the less important phase of his subject encroach upon the more important, — in other words, he is so busy in drilling boys on the books which illustrate the subject that he has insufficient time to teach the subject itself. We do not mean, of course, that boys should be sent up for examination who do not know the books. What we do mean is that teachers of English who spend more than half their time on the prescribed books are forgetting that although the boy who is ignorant of his books may have a very small chance, the boy who cannot write has no chance at all.

¹ *English Composition*, p. 117.

PARAGRAPHS

We are now ready to consider paragraphs and whole compositions, which no writer, however skilful, can properly construct unless he first makes a careful plan. Yet the number of answers which show careful planning is extremely small. It may be said that boys of eighteen are incapable of doing much more than writing reasonably correct sentences one by one. This we deny. We believe that any boy can acquire the unnatural habit of beginning a paragraph with the transitional clause, "A second good trait of Macbeth's character was," just as he can acquire the unnatural habit of putting the verb at the end of a long sentence when he writes Latin prose. In each case what is necessary is merely drill and plenty of it.

To show how necessary it is to plan out paragraph structure in advance, let us observe that as a rule examination questions are of two types. Of the first an example is "How Gareth became a Knight" (June, 1906). Of the second an example is "The Knights of Tennyson and of Scott" (September, 1906). The paragraph structure of an answer to the first question is not difficult to forecast, for the answer is a brief narrative, which naturally follows the order of events in time. To answer the second question, however, is an entirely different matter. For here, instead of following the natural sequence of events, we have to arrange in their logical order various instances of a general truth. Inasmuch as the paper in Elementary English for September, 1906, had out of fifteen questions ten which are obviously of this analytic type, it is clearly necessary to know how answers to such questions can best be framed. Take the example already given, "The Knights of Tennyson and of Scott." Evidently there are at least two possible ways of constructing a composition on this subject. We may begin our outline thus: —

I. The Knights of Tennyson.

A. Their organization.

1. The Round Table.

B. Their vows.

Etc., etc.

II. The Knights of Scott.

A. Their life as soldiers of fortune.

Etc., etc.

A two-page answer thus composed would consist of two paragraphs, — one devoted to the knights of Tennyson, one to the knights of Scott. Or the composition might be planned in this way: —

I. The ideals

A. Of the Knights of Tennyson

B. Of the Knights of Scott

and so on in a series of paragraphs each devoted to the discussion of some one characteristic. For a short answer the first of these plans would probably be more effective; but our purpose is not so much to consider the relative merits of these plans as to point out that to follow either is altogether a different matter from "spinning a yarn," as one is asked to do in telling how Gareth became a knight.

It is assumed that whenever a pupil composes a two-page theme at school, he is required to precede it by a detailed plan in outline. Teachers who are not requiring such plans should begin at once to do so. In the examination room as well as in school, the pupil should make a plan before he writes his composition. When we were discussing words and sentences, we advised candidates to save at least one-fifth of their time for revision. It is even more necessary to spend at least another fifth in prevision. A boy may make his outline in his examination book, or, if he desires it, he will be given extra sheets of paper to scribble plans on. We cannot too strongly urge the candidate not to put pen to paper until he has thought out the precise course which his answer is to take, and has jotted down a heading or a sub-heading for each of his principal points. Meanwhile the boy in front of him may have written half a page; but no matter: it is almost certainly a very incoherent half-page, and its writer may very probably find that one may unload facts and facts and still get *E*. Let every teacher who sends up a boy to the English examination in June, 1907, tell that boy that in the opinion of the men who will read his examination book nothing

is more important than this: *to forget that the room is unfamiliar and the occasion momentous, to be unconcerned at the progress which others appear to be making, and to remember that they also write who only sit and think.*

That this advice is much needed will become clearer when we have shown by examples how faulty paragraphing in examination books is at present. Many candidates have no clearer notion of what a paragraph actually is than had the boy who wrote:—

120. "The Lady in 'Comus' remains pure just as any virtuous woman would.

"Comus, however, is not like a real person at all. No human being has the power of changing mortals into the shape of an animal.

"The Spirit and Sabrina are not like real persons in any respect.

"The witches in 'Macbeth' are not very much like human beings."

Comment on such work is hardly necessary. It is precisely the kind of writing that, under the rule that "no candidate will be accepted in English whose work is seriously faulty in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or division into paragraphs," merits the grade of *E*. But paragraphing need not be so grotesquely bad as this to cause failure. Book after book is marked *E* because, as in the instance which follows, the paragraphs run three or four to the page.¹

121. "Two brothers traveling through a thick forest with their sister are overtaken by night.

"The brothers leave their sister and go seeking for help. While they are gone the sister hears voices, and not knowing they are the voices of Comus and his rout, she sets out to find them.

"To guide anyone who might hear, towards her, she sings a song. Comus, a wickid enchanter, hears it and appears before her in the garb of a shepherd.

"He offers to guide her to his lowly cottage and she follows him, trustingly.

"He leads her to his enchanted hall and there tries, by threats, entreaties and flatteries, to make her drink a draught, which will turn her into a beast.

¹ The books in which Harvard entrance examinations are written contain fifteen lines to the page. A page, therefore, means about seventy-five words.

"The lady resists all his efforts and refutes all his arguments successfully.

"Then the brothers guided by an attendant spirit, who helps all good people in distress, rush in and put Comus and his followers to rout.

"The attendant spirit calls up from her river, Sabrina, a nymph whose pleasure it is to help maidens in distress.

"She instantly releases the Lady from the chair, to which Comus had chained her with invisible bonds, and then the three go on their way rejoicing.

"Comus was written to show how virtue, in the end, can overcome vice."

At the other extreme from the "sentence paragraph" is the unbroken composition of three or four pages.

122. "Many critics have toiled to give us an analysis of Macbeth's character, but, to tell the truth, their work is practically unnecessary. For the great Shakespeare himself has put into the mouth of Lady Macbeth words, which give us the key to his hero's inmost soul. He is brave and ambitious; but he is 'without the illness,' which should attend his ambition. In the eyes of Lady Macbeth, whose only thought is a passionate desire for power and glory, this may seem false ambition; but, in fact, it is the only true and noble one. When the temptation arises in his mind, he puts it down at first. 'Duncan is my liege and guest' he says to himself, when the thought occurs to him, to kill his king; 'I ought to guard him, not to bear the knife myself.' And when the tempter appears in the shape of his own wife, even then he nobly resists the force of evil. 'I dare do all that may become a man, who dares do more is none,' he exclaims, and at that moment he stands before us as a truly great and noble man. Alas! Had he but remained strong! But his next question already indicates his downfall: 'what, if it should be found out?' From now on we see the tragic downfall and ruin of an originally noble soul; but great though our sympathy is, we cannot justify any of his acts; it is impossible to consider even his soliloquies in the latter part of the play anything but empty sophistries."

It is perfectly true that such a composition contains fewer than three hundred words and that English literature abounds in paragraphs of three hundred words or even more. But that seems to us to be beside the point. Macaulay's paragraphs, although they often run up to five hundred words, are fractions of chapters which frequently contain a hundred pages. On the

other hand, the writer of an entrance examination book hardly ever writes a composition longer than six pages. His compositions, therefore, are really in miniature, and his paragraphs should be in scale with his whole compositions. Consequently, when a boy goes on for four pages in a single paragraph, the examiner is tempted to think that if time permitted, he would go on indefinitely.

That the writer of the preceding composition did not divide it into paragraphs was probably because he wrote each sentence without knowing the direction which the next one was to take. This is only another way of saying that, not having made an outline plan of his answer, he had no means of seeing that his whole composition should not have consisted merely of sentences, but of two or three divisions of his subject, longer than any single sentence ought to be, which could be indicated only by paragraphs. Yet occasional indentation will not transform into a series of real paragraphs such masses of fact as we have been discussing, because the boy has not thought out his answer in terms of paragraphs.

In the next example the case is different: —

123. "There are two attributes of Scott's poetry which stand out above all others. They are action and description. The first of these is characteristic of his 'Marmion' and 'Lady of the Lake' especially. From the time one starts the 'Lady of the Lake' there is something happening all the time. The description of the stag hunt in the first Canto presages great things and the rest of the poem fulfils all promises in that direction. To me poetry had always seemed dull and prosaic until I read Scott. The young mind is full of action and demands something that has active, virile life to it. I have read 'Lady of the Lake' more times than any other selection or book simply because it was stirring and showed life. Second only in my estimation, and according to some readers first, is the element of description. He doesn't weary one with useless description but nevertheless his attention to detail is surprising when one looks especially for that thing. However, with a great diversity of adjectives and his use of synonyms he so skilfully goes into details that one does not realize it unless looking for it particularly. Although too strongly written for delicacy, it is refined, and even being refined, it shows the martial spirit of war and the rough life of the Highlander."

Here the sub-structure of thought is such as to indicate clearly the proper places to break the answer into paragraphs. The boy virtually wrote from the following plan: —

I. The chief attributes of Scott's poetry.

A. Action.

B. Description.

If the sentences beginning "The first of these" and "Second only in my estimation" had each been made to begin a new paragraph, the composition would have been in form as well as in thought an organic series of paragraphs.

Let us now consider an error in paragraphing analogous to the faulty division into sentences which we noted on page 17.

124. "Of the scenes in *The Merchant of Venice* the ones which excite the most sympathy for Shylock are those where Bassanio asks for the loan, the scene where he bewails that even his daughter has left him, and finally the Court scene. In the first of these three Shylock probably makes his most famous plea, and tries to show Bassanio that he like other men must eat to live, and has feelings, a heart and soul. His defence of himself in this instance is strong and shows his good character.

"In the second scene Shakspeare makes the reader realize the agony of Shylock, when even his daughter, Rebecca, runs away and leaves him alone. The last scene in which Portia, acting as a judge, pronounces to Shylock that he can have a pound a flesh, and not an ounce more nor a drop of blood. Poor Shylock sees right away that he has lost all. He can neither obtain his three thousand ducats or his pound of flesh. This last scene probably excites more sorrow for him than any other, because here even the learned judge turns against him."

According to its plan, this answer should consist of four paragraphs, for although these four paragraphs would all be short, the points are coördinate, and some of them have been developed in more than one sentence.

From the fault illustrated by the last two examples the following composition is free, for its writer has not only thought in paragraphs, but has also indicated them to the eye.

125. "Our sympathy for Shylock is aroused in the scene where he defends his religion and in the trial scene.

"Driven to passion and fury by persecution, and finding his reviler within his power, Shylock delivers his famous justification of revenge,

beginning: 'To bait fish withal' — At this point Shylock rises to his greatest height. His defense of his religion is noble and strong — his justification of revenge we can not help admiring.

"The appeal to our sympathies in the trial scene is of a different nature. Misfortune after misfortune weighs him down. His life is in danger, his property confiscated, his daughter married to a Christian, Shylock is compelled to change his faith. In this scene Mr. E. H. Sothorn, whose interpretation of the character throughout the play fills us with a certain awe for Shylock's power, shows us a weak, broken old man, who totters and falls as he leaves the room. We pity Shylock here."

WHOLE COMPOSITIONS

When we turn from paragraphs to whole compositions, we find that in answers as short as those in examination books must be the problem of structure is much the same as in the case of the paragraph. Here, as there, excellence consists in the logical coördination which can be made only by careful prevision. But of course the candidate must answer the question accurately, squarely, and at sufficient length. Failure to do one or another of these things, however, is so common that it will be worth our while to consider certain types of answers the faults of which as whole compositions are inseparably connected with the fact that the information of the writer was in one way or another defective.

First of all, there are a great many answers which have to be graded *E* because they are too meagre. Such answers are most likely to occur toward the end of the examination book and seem to show either that the examination is too long or that candidates spend too much time in answering the earlier questions. With all due regard to the necessity of emphasizing quality rather than quantity, and to the difficulty of knowing precisely how much to require in a given time from a boy whom one has never seen, it is certainly not too much to expect that in fifteen minutes a candidate shall write more than this: —

126. "The characters in *Comus* are very much unlike those in Shakspeare's plays. The mask, *Comus*, is nothing but a beautiful myth, where as Shakspeare has plays which pertain to possible life, and the characters are nearer life than those in *Comus*."

It is to be observed that the boy was asked to give reasons for his answer. Although he has presumably read *Comus* and three plays of Shakspeare, he writes a composition which, inasmuch as he fails to mention a single character or even a single play, has really no more value than a simple "yes" or "no."

Another answer to the same question is worth reproducing, although its faults are extremely obvious: —

127. "Some of the Characters in *Comus* are more like real characters than those in Shakspeare's plays. Others are not as real.

"The characters, The Lady and her two brothers are real; because the mask was written so that these real people should be the same characters both in life and the mask.

"As for *Comus* and the Spirit there could not be more unreal characters."

This answer is slightly better than the one before it, for the writer attempts to illustrate his point. He illustrates only one-half of the topic, however, and that very clumsily.

For the next answer twenty minutes were allowed. The result was a composition which, without regard to its other faults, deserves *E* for its substance.

128. "Macbeth the villianous king of Scotland had a number of good traits, and often showed through his weak nature a rather tender heart.

"In battle Macbeth was indeed a brave man, and won great distinction for himself.

"Although a murderer he showed great devotion toward his wife and children.

"The good traits of a person who has comitted such crimes as Macbeth did, are not likely to have their characters printed in a very pleasing light, although Macbeth no doubt had numerous good traits that we do not know about."

Inaccuracy is if anything more prevalent and more disastrous than meagreness. From occasional errors of fact hardly any examination book is free; but occasional errors of fact are not fatal. Yet of course no candidate can afford to indulge more than once or twice in such astonishing statements as these: —

129. "Gareth was the youngest son of King Lot and Queen Belladonna."

130. "Pope as a dramatist in his *Cato* is not as good as Marvell in *Dr. Faustus*."

131. "I like Shakespeare very well, and have read most of his Waverley Novels."

132. "Addison's first work was a poem in which he compared Wellington to the Gaurdian Angle, because of his ode on the Battle of Blenheim."

133. "Comus is the story of a man who was to be made Earl at Ludlow Castle."

134. "Addison's college life was very pleasant and his best friend there was a Mr. King, upon whose death he wrote *Lycidas*."

135. "Johnson's Club was a set of literary men, of which Johnson was the leader. . . . Among those who were members, were Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, Spencer, and others."

Persistent inaccuracy, however, is fatal, especially when, as is usually the case, it is accompanied by bad writing.

136. "Addison was in many respects similiar to other great writters, such as Goldsmith Johnson and Steel.

"He started poor and worked many years as a book-sellers hag. His early life was a very wandering one such as that of Oliver Goldsmith and Johnson. He travelled in Italy and became an instructor in a college there. He returned to England and attempted polotics, but was not a success. He was given the honory position of concilor for Irland.

"His manner was a very quite and modest one, which commanded the respect and love of all, even his opponents."

137. "Addison passed his early life in the place in which he was born. It was situated a little way from Harvard College on what was then called Tory's Row. He was educated by a private tutor, and, at the age of sixteen entered Harvard College. He had no rooms at the College, but lived at his own home. The beauty of the country around his place afforded him many topics for his books."

The examples above are comically obvious. Less entertaining, but more useful, are the following instances of failure to meet the question squarely. In the first, the boy professes to answer this question: "Are the characters in *Comus* as much like real persons as the characters in Shakspeare's plays? Give reasons for your answer." He writes as follows:—

138. "I do not think that the characters in 'Comus' are much like those in Shakspeare's plays. They do not seem to have the spirit, or do

they have the power of interesting the reader as any of Shakspeare's do. Although the characters in 'Comus' have not the opportunity to bring out their spirit or power, in the opportunity that is given them, they do not interest the reader as Shakspeare's do."

Such a topic as "Scott's Poetry" is sufficiently liberal, but it hardly includes the subject matter of this answer: —

139. "When one speaks of Scott's poetry one immediately thinks of 'The Lady of the Lake.' It is true that this is his greatest poem. When we read his historical novels, such as *Ivanhoe*, we would not say if asked that we were reading poetry. Yet such is the case. Scott's descriptions in this, and other of his stories, are as near to being poetry as anything can be. Thus we see that practically everything that Scott wrote was poetry, and as such has been surpassed by very few writers up to the present day."

Such discursiveness the examiner tries to check by framing a question like this, "Relate the early life of Addison up to the time when he began to write for the *Spectator*." The following answer is only one of many in which the candidate refused to confine himself to the prescribed subject: —

140. "In Addeson's early life he was a great scholar, and wrote Latin poetry. He was a very smart man, but was easily embarrassed. He was a whig. Being a very able man, the Whig party when they came in Power sent Addeson to france to study french. He stayed abroad about three years, visiting Italy, Germany, Endland. While traveling in Italy, it is supposed that he conceived the Idea to put the play of Cato upon the stage. At this period the plays were very smutty, and Addeson greatly improved them.

"Addeson when talking with his friends could speak eloquently but when he once tried to make a speech in Parliment, he was unable to say one word.

"Pope and Addeson were great friends, but they had a falling out, on account of Popes jealousy. They never became intimate friends again while they lived."

Occasionally, as in the next extract, a boy evades the point by writing not a general answer, but a very specific answer which, however, has little or nothing to do with the precise question.

141. "Addison was a great scholar for a certain period of Latin literature. While at college his latin verse was the envy of the whole college.

Later, Boileau the french critic who maintained that no modern could possibly write good Latin verse said that Addison wrote the best imitation latin verse that he had read. But though Addison knew one period of Latin well he knew neither other periods of Latin literature nor any Greek literature. This is shown in some of his writings where he describes places which are familiar to Greek literature or other periods of Latin literature, yet we find no references in the notes or anywhere else to these."

In some compositions of this sort the attempt to evade the question seems deliberate. In others the faulty emphasis is obviously unintentional. Boys who really wish to meet the question squarely may be helped to do so if they remember that

1. Before they begin to write they must read with the strictest attention every question, no matter how simple it seems. The question on the plot of *Comus*, for example, tripped up a great many boys who, failing to observe that *Comus* when printed in italics means not the character but the masque itself, answered the imaginary question, "What evil design had Comus?"

2. They must resist the temptation to over-emphasize any points which stand out in their memory with undue prominence. Suppose, for example, a boy is asked to discuss "Antonio and Bassanio as Gentlemen." He begins his composition by observing that the difference between these two characters may best be shown in their treatment of Shylock. At this point he unfortunately remembers that while at school he wrote a composition on "The Character of Shylock." To write down what he remembers of this is so much easier than to stick to what he was asked to do that he cannot resist the temptation. The probable result is that two-thirds of his answer is entirely beside the point. Evasions like this are marked with particular severity, for they always raise the presumption that the boy is using material which represents not his unaided style, but the combined efforts of himself and his teacher.

Akin to the fault of answering evasively any given question is the error of throwing the whole examination book out of proportion by writing on one topic at inordinate length. For example, one boy wrote five and a half pages (one-half of his entire book) upon a single question. In answering this question he was asked

to spend twenty minutes. Apparently he spent a great deal more, for to each of the other questions upon which twenty-minute compositions were required he devoted one page. The result was an injury to the two questions which were slighted that far outweighed the advantage of answering one question very fully. The upshot of all this is that candidates must read carefully the directions at the top of the paper and must divide their time equally, or in such proportion as the examiner suggests, among the questions.

It is a pleasure to turn from answers in which, as Stevenson says of *Treasure Island*, "the general coloring was uniform and sad," to a few compositions which for their maturity of thought, their fulness of information, their organic structure, and their almost complete freedom from elementary blunders, clearly merit distinction.

142. "If, in writing his admirable drama, 'The Merchant of Venice,' Shakespeare originally intended to paint Shylock, the Jew, as a mere villain and object of scorn, the great dramatist must assuredly have changed his purpose, in order to produce a character exciting such a variety of emotions as Shylock invariably calls forth. For while, in portions of the play, our feelings as regards this character are those of abhorrence, yet there are nevertheless passages which bring forth strong and undisguised commiseration, and even admiration.

"Of those passages which excite our sympathy for Shylock, there are quite a goodly number. One of these is that part in which the Jew makes that famous speech in which he asks, 'Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew ears?' Shylock renders here a well-deserved rebuke to the haughty Antonio and his friends, who did not seem to realize that Jews, like other people, have feelings and understandings.

"The scene wherein Shylock bewails the elopement of Jessica is, moreover, another portion exciting pity for the Jew; for even while we laugh at the incongruous mixture of avarice and parental devotion here displayed, we cannot but feel for him whose daughter and money have both been taken from him. When, furthermore, Shylock hears of his daughter's travels, and that she has sold the ring which was given him by his departed wife, his grief cannot fail to awaken our sympathy.

"But most of all, we are compelled to sympathize with Shylock at the court scene. Then it is that we behold him not merely baffled and defeated by a trick of the law, but in addition completely ruined and disgraced; and as he staggers forth, broken down, dishonored, insulted, and undone, we are compelled to consider him an object of pity.

"In various scenes, then, we observe that we are forced to sympathize with Shylock: when he is insulted, wronged, robbed and finally — and most of all — when he is ruined by those professing to be Christians."

143. "Little is known of Addison's boyhood, except that he seems to have been full of mischief, which does not seem consistent with his later life. He was sent to Charter House, where he met Steele. He early developed a fondness and an aptitude for Latin poetry, and spent much of his leisure hours in reading Latin verse. He entered Queen's College, Oxford, where he surprised all by his remarkable knowledge of Latin. Because of this he was moved to Magdalene College, of which Dr. Lancaster was master. He became a Demy and later a Fellow. He wrote several Latin poems, which were pronounced almost as good as Vergil.

"His first attempts in English verse were of no particular value, but they were received enthusiastically by the public. The reason of this enthusiasm may be attributed to the fact that the heroic couplets were not so well known at that time. Among some of these verses, there was a poem, written in praise of one of Congreve's works. There followed an exchange of civilities, and through Congreve, Addison was introduced to some of the great men of the time.

"Among these was Lord Somers, at that time Chancellor. He proved to be one of Addison's most helpful friends.

"It had always been supposed that Addison would take orders, as his college had many advantages to offer in that line, and as his father, Lancelot Addison, was a prominent churchman. But, when the time came for Addison to make his choice, he was influenced by Somers to choose in favor of the diplomatic service. It was feared that the College authorities would object, but the Minister wrote to Hough and arranged matters.

"Addison was provided with a pension and went abroad to study French. In Paris he met Malbranche and Boileau, and several other prominent men. Owing to the Duke of Anjou's inheriting the Kingdom of Spain, he left for Italy where he visited the principle cities. He went to Geneva, and, owing to the loss of his pension, he became the tutor to a young Englishman. He shortly returned to England, and for some time was in pecuniary need.

"After Blenheim, Godolphin, then Minister, following the advice of Halifax, asked Addison to write a poem for this victory. The Campaign was the result of this. Shortly after this poem's appearance, Addison published his 'Travels in Italy' and his opera 'Rosamund.'

"Owing to a partial change in the Ministry, Addison was appointed Under-Secretary to Ireland, and he left England for Dublin. It was from this city that he send his first contribution to the 'Tatler,' which was afterwards revived in the immortal 'Spectator.'"

144. "Johnson was a man of great ability, and of renowned taste for talking. It is probable, then, that it was Johnson's love for talking which brought it into his mind to organize a club, destined to contain the greatest authors, statesmen, and artists of the day. In this club we find such men as Goldsmith, Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other lesser lights. The club met once a week, or as often as there were three members present, for that constituted a meeting. Although Boswell does not say so directly, we infer from a few things dropped by Goldsmith that every evening Johnson took a mortgage on the conversation, and the other members were compelled to subside into their seats and listen for hours to his never ending rotation of fifteen-letter words. Notwithstanding this, we are sure that Johnson's Club did a great deal for its members and for the world, in that each member was enlightened by the others, and the world by the writings, speeches, and pictures of all."

145. "Whether or not we shall call Antonio and Bassanio gentlemen depends much on the two conceptions of the word — that is — the sixteenth and twentieth century conceptions. In Shakespeare's day the requisites of gentlemanliness were somewhat different than our own. It was held that a day laborer could not possibly be a gentleman — his rough life, low birth, lack of education, want of so-called courtesy were things that could not be passed over. On the other hand unless a man were a sot, an utterly depraved rake, or an out-and-out criminal, suavity, wealth, and a feeling and show of contempt and disgust for the masses were the outward and visible signs of gentility. At that time too, morals were at a lower ebb. As in the case of D'Artagnan in the 'Three Musketeers' a mistress was a most legitimate and even honorable means of support, and to recoup a lost fortune by marriage not only a common but also the only sensible way. But to-day we feel different about those things. We know well clothes do not make the man, and that courtesy — the true kind — is as often found in cottages as palaces. 'He married for money' is not only a jest but a sneer and term of scorn.

"Antonio was a product of his time. His attitude towards Shylock, even in seeking a favor, was rude and discourteous in the extreme. Further more, his attitude towards Bassanio's marriage was much like that of the French syndicate that fianceers an international marriage. Bassanio also makes no bones of saying that tho he loves Portia truly he expects to restore his wasted patrimony by the 'conquest.'

"I suppose, however, those things are non-essentials in this case at least. Antonio is more than generous to Bassanio. Bassanio repays with love, and is acceptable to Portia, a thing which most of us would take as proof enough that he was a gentleman. It is certain that Shakespeare considered them so. He was guided by his time of life. Judged by his standards they were gentlemen. Let us so judge them."

II. ENGLISH A

Inasmuch as the candidate who passes English A (the advanced entrance examination) is exempt from the prescribed English Composition of the Freshman year (also called English A), he must have done the equivalent of English A as it is given at Harvard College. It is clear from the phrasing of the Catalogue that to read the prescribed books is not the chief part of the requirements. That the list is not intended to seem fixed appears from the fact that certain selections from Tennyson and from Browning are suggested rather than required; and that it is not self-sufficient is obvious from the foot-note on page 336 of the Catalogue for 1906-07: "In connection with the prescribed books, parallel or subsidiary reading should be encouraged." Indeed, a boy who reads these books ought to find them a source of pleasure, and it is believed that he will if he follows the advice of the Catalogue (page 336) that he "should read them as he reads other books, — not trying to remember them in detail, but regarding each work as a whole and giving it such appreciation as shall enable him to write about it intelligently. In every case the examiner will regard knowledge of the books as less important than ability to write English."

Inasmuch as ability to write English is the chief requisite, at least one-half of the four years of preparation in English should be devoted to Composition. What the earlier stages of this training in Composition should be is probably apparent from the first part of this report. But since candidates for the advanced entrance examination are really expected to be one year more mature than those candidates whose faults we have been discussing in Part I, it is clear that the final stage of preparation for the advanced examination must closely correspond to the programme of English A as it is given at Harvard College.

In English A at Harvard College the theory of composition is taught throughout the year, partly by lectures and recitations based on Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric*, Wendell's *English Composition*, and other text-books, partly by oral and written exercises.

At the beginning of the year, each student is given the following syllabus: —

ENGLISH A SYLLABUS

I. WORDS.

A. Requirements of Good Use.

1. Reputable.
2. National.
3. Present.

B. Violations of Good Use.

1. Barbarisms.
2. Solecisms.
3. Improproprieties.

C. Choice of Words.

1. Clearness.
2. Force.
3. Ease.

D. Number of Words.

1. Clearness.
2. Force.
3. Ease.

E. Words Misspelled.

F. New Words.

REFERENCES:¹ J. B. Greenough and G. L. Kittredge, *Words and their Ways in English Speech*; *A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, Part i, Books 1 and 2; Arlo Bates, *Talks on Writing English*, I, iv, vii (Figures); Scott and Denny, *Composition-Literature*, v-vi; *Wendell, *English Composition*, Chap. ii; Bates, II, iv (Participles and Gerunds), v (Particles), xi (Figures); Pearson, *Principles of Composition*, xii; Herrick and Damon, *Composition and Rhetoric*, pp. 241-281; H. Spencer, *Philosophy of Style*, pp. 9-16, 27-34.

II. SENTENCES.

A. Kinds.

1. Periodic.
2. Loose.

¹ Only those books marked with an asterisk are prescribed.

B. Principles of Composition.

1. Unity.
 - a. Of Substance.
 - b. Of Expression.
2. Mass (or Emphasis).
3. Coherence.
 - a. Order.
 - b. Grammatical Form.
 - c. Connectives.

C. Variety of Sentence to suit Kind and Tone of the Composition.

REFERENCES: *Wendell, Chap. iii; Hill, *Principles*, Book 1, Chap. iii; Bates, II, vi (Parallel Construction); Pearson, ix-xi; Herrick and Damon, pp. 283-340; H. Spencer, pp. 16-27; W. F. Webster, *English: Composition and Literature*, pp. 200-234.

III. PARAGRAPHS.

A. Principles of Composition.

1. Unity.
2. Mass.
3. Coherence.

REFERENCES: *Wendell, Chap. iv; Bates, II, vii (The Topic Sentence) ix; Hill, *Principles*, pp. 230-238; Scott and Denny, *Paragraph Writing*; Scott and Denny, *Composition-Rhetoric*, pp. 41-133; Pearson, Chaps. vi-viii; Herrick and Damon, pp. 347-363; Webster, Chap. vii.

IV. WHOLE COMPOSITIONS.

A. Kinds.

1. Exposition.
 - a. Pure Exposition.
 - b. Criticism.
 - c. Biography.
2. Argument.
 - a. Brief.
 - x. Introduction.
 - y. Brief Proper.
 - z. Conclusion.
 - b. Forensic.

3. Description.

a. Kinds.

x. Scientific.

y. Artistic.

b. Principles.

w. Point of View.

x. Dominant Tone.

y. Selection of Details.

z. Arrangement of Details.

c. Description in the Service of Narration.

4. Narration.

a. Plot.

b. Setting (or Background).

c. Characterization.

5. Letter-Writing.

a. Formal.

b. Informal.

B. Principles of Composition.

1. Unity.

2. Mass.

3. Coherence.

GENERAL REFERENCES: *Wendell, v; Bates, I, iii; *Hill, *Principles*, pp. 239-246; Pearson, ii-v; Herrick and Damon, 375-387.

EXPOSITION: Bates, I, x-xi; Bates, II, xii; Hill, *Principles*, pp. 300-326; Lamont, *Specimens of Exposition*, Introduction; Webster, Chap. v.

CRITICISM: Bates, I, xxi.

ARGUMENT: *Baker and Huntington, *Principles of Argumentation*, pp. 14-60, 64-77, 168-194, 205-257; Bates, II, xii, xiii.

DESCRIPTION: Bates, I, xiv, xv; Bates, II, x (Point of View), xiii; Baldwin, *Specimens of Description*, Introduction; Scott and Denny, *Composition-Literature*, viii; Webster, iv.

NARRATION: Bliss Perry, *A Study of Prose Fiction*; Bates, I, xvi-xix; Bates, II, xiv, xv (Dialogue), xvii (Letter-Writing); Brewster, *Specimens of Narration*, Introduction; Webster, ii.

V. PUNCTUATION.

REFERENCES: Bates, II, xvi; Herrick and Damon, pp. 96-109; Hill, *General Rules for Punctuation*.

This syllabus serves both as the outline of the course and as the table of contents of the student's note-book. In this note-book he is expected not only to record the gist of what his instructor tells him about such matters as Unity, Solecisms, or Exposition, but also to illustrate them by entering and correcting, each under its proper heading, such errors in his compositions as his instructor may indicate.

It is to be observed that this syllabus covers three subjects: Rhetoric (I), Composition (II, III, IV B), and the Forms of Prose Literature (IV A).

THEMES

Practice in the application of these principles of Rhetoric and Composition to the various kinds of writing is obtained in one-page daily themes, some of which are written in the class-room on topics announced after the class has assembled, and in longer themes prepared at intervals of about a fortnight. The long themes are as follows:—

- I. Who I am and why I came to Harvard (500–1000 words).
- II. How to make or do something (500–1000 words).
- III. A subject selected with the approval of the instructor (500–1000 words).
- IV. An exposition of something learned in a College course (500–1000 words).
- V. An expression of opinion (500–1000 words).
- VI. A biographical portrait (1500–2000 words).
- VII. A brief of an argument (4 to 5 pages).
- VIII. An argument (1000–1500 words).
- IX. A description (500–1000 words).
- X. A narrative (500–1000 words).
- XI. A narrative (1000–2000 words).

Each of these themes is preceded by a plan in outline, is criticised in detail by the instructor in a personal conference with the student, and is then either revised or rewritten.

PRESCRIBED READING

In addition to the study of Rhetoric and Composition, and to the writing and rewriting of themes, certain reading is required. This year the reading is as follows: —

FIRST HALF-YEAR

- General. Shakspeare, *As You Like It; Othello; Henry IV, Part I; Henry V.*
Specimens of Prose Composition, Part I.
- Oct. Macaulay, *History of England*, Chapter iii.
- Nov. L. B. R. Briggs, *School, College, and Character.*
- Dec. J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People*, Part III, Chapter vii, Section 3, "Queen Elizabeth"; Macaulay, "Sir William Temple," in *Critical and Historical Essays.*
- Jan. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque.*

SECOND HALF-YEAR

- General. The English Bible: Genesis, 1-8, 22, 37, 39-50; Deuteronomy, 1-11; 1 Samuel, 16-20; 2 Samuel, 18; 1 Kings, 17-22; Job; Psalms, 1-34, 37, 42, 46, 68, 84, 90, 91, 95, 96, 107, 115, 120-122, 127, 137, 139, 145-150; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Isaiah, 1, 2, 6-11, 40, 41, 60; Ezekiel, 37; Revelation, 1-5, 21, 22.
Specimens of Prose Composition, Part II.
- Feb. Lincoln, *Letters and Speeches* ("Little Masterpieces" series).
- Mar. Stevenson, "A Night among the Pines," from *Travels with a Donkey*; Kipling, *The Spring Running*; Ruskin, *Selections* ("Little Masterpieces" series), pp. 1-100.
- April. Kipling, *William the Conqueror, The Man Who would be King, Without Benefit of Clergy*; Poe, *The Cask of Amontillado, The Gold Bug*; Stevenson, *The Merry Men, A Lodging for the Night.*

May. Two of the following novels: Thackeray, *Henry Esmond*; George Eliot, *Middlemarch*; Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; Kipling, *Kim*; Stevenson, *Treasure Island*; Dickens, *David Copperfield*; Trollope, *The Prime Minister*, *Barchester Towers*; Hardy, *The Return of the Native*; Meredith, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*; Scott, *Kenilworth*; Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*; Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*.

These books are selected to illustrate the kind of writing which the student is practising at the time. The most explicit illustration of these kinds of writing is in the *Specimens of Prose Composition*. The other prescribed books are merely read; the *Specimens of Prose Composition* is very carefully studied. Selections from it, each short enough to give at one reading a total impression of its structure, are read in class and are so thoroughly analyzed that each student is expected to become intimately familiar with their craftsmanship.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that the suggestions made in this report should, if followed, tend to improve the quality of the examination books in other subjects as well as in English.

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